

to offer limited pension funding relief to companies that provide defined benefit plans. While this relief is much needed, I am concerned about any such action that could increase the liability of the PBGC in its current state. As we found at an Aging Committee hearing last year, the agency sorely lacks the oversight and policy direction it requires.

There is little doubt that an improved PBGC governance structure is necessary. The PBGC's boards consist of only three members: the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Treasury, and the Secretary of Commerce. These three members obviously have their own agencies to run, and are doing so during an economic crisis.

The Government Accountability Office has indicated for years that the PBGC board members do not have enough time or resources to provide the policy direction and oversight required by the agency. In 28 years, the full board has met only 20 times. These findings have been echoed in reports by the McKinsey & Company consulting group and by the Brookings Institution.

The role of PBGC is too crucial to allow its governance to slip through the cracks. And we have seen devastating results when it has. The former PBGC Director was able to adopt a risky investment strategy just months before the market downturn and inappropriately involve himself in the bidding process, with little more than a rubberstamped approval from the board.

We must ensure that these problems do not impact the ability of the agency to function going forward. I have crafted an amendment based on the PBGC Governance Improvement Act, a bill I introduced with Senators BENNET, MCCASKILL and FEINGOLD, which would significantly improve the PBGC board's governance oversight structure. First and foremost, the amendment would expand the Board's membership, requiring it to meet at least four times a year, and ensuring that the board retains continuity during a change in administration. The amendment would also ensure the PBGC Advisory Council, inspector general, and general counsel have full and direct independent access to the entire board. Finally, the amendment would require the PBGC director to recuse him or herself from potential conflicts of interest, to include any involvement with the agency's technical evaluation panels. These small commonsense changes are a bare minimum needed to make sure the PBGC is secure and taxpayer's are protected.

The role of the PBGC is a vital one, now more than ever. For 44 million Americans with defined benefit pension plans, PBGC is the only thing that stands between the secure retirement they have worked so hard for, and the prospect of living without the retirement income they have earned. We must get the PBGC back on track, or

face the possibility of absorbing its obligations as taxpayers.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I understand the concerns raised by Senator KOHL, and agree that these are serious issues that need to be addressed. While I believe that short-term, targeted pension funding relief is critically important and should move as quickly as possible, I would welcome the opportunity to work with my colleagues to pursue longer term solutions addressing the many challenges facing our defined benefit pension system, including PBGC governance.

I plan to hold hearings in the HELP Committee this year addressing the state of the defined benefit system and the PBGC. I look forward to discussing with Senator KOHL the ideals and goals reflected in the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Governance Improvement Act of 2009, and I thank him for bringing this important legislation to my attention. I hope that we can work collaboratively on legislation to improve the security of defined benefit pensions and the agency that insures these plans, as well as on broader initiatives to build greater retirement security for all working families.

Mr. BAUCUS. I applaud the chairman of the Select Committee on Aging for raising this important issue. I look forward to working with him and the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee on addressing the shortcomings he has highlighted.

Mr. KOHL. With those assurances, I will not offer my amendment and look forward to working with Chairman HARKIN and Chairman BAUCUS on improving the PBGC.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of New Mexico). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, March 9, after any leader time, the time until 11 a.m. be for a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders, with the Republicans controlling the first portion; that at 11 a.m., the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 4213 and proceed as under the order of March 5, with all provisions of that order remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UGANDA RECOVERY ACT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am a cosponsor of a bill introduced by Senators FEINGOLD and BROWNBACK, the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act. I am one of the 62 cosponsors of this legislation, and I believe this broad bipartisan support speaks to both the ur-

gency of this issue and the importance of this legislation.

On a continent plagued by man-made tragedy, the Lord's Resistance Army stands out as a manufacturer of that tragedy. The U.S. State Department describes the LRA as "vicious and cult-like." Formed in the 1980s to overthrow the Ugandan government, the LRA engaged in such widespread violence that at one time, about 2 million Ugandans were displaced from their homes. The LRA massacred, mutilated and abducted civilians, and forced many into sexual servitude. An estimated 66,000 Ugandan youths were forced to fight for the group.

The good news is that the Ugandan government has now largely pushed the LRA out of Uganda. The bad news is that the scars it has left behind are raw and real for Ugandans; and that meanwhile, the LRA has moved into parts of Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic, continuing to spread violence and terror. Between September of 2008 and July of 2009, the United Nations estimates that LRA violence claimed 1,300 civilian lives, that the LRA abducted another 1,400 civilians, and that more than 300,000 were forced from their homes.

This legislation, which 63 Senators support, would take a number of steps to address both the aftermath of the LRA's rampage in Northern Uganda and its continuing violence in Uganda's neighbor nations. The Act would require that within six months, the United States develop a comprehensive strategy for dealing with the LRA, including an outline of steps to protect the civilian population against LRA violence. The act would authorize funding under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide humanitarian assistance in areas affected by LRA. And it would provide assistance for reconstruction and for promotion of justice and reconciliation in areas of Uganda recovering from the LRA's depredations.

It is unfortunate that despite the broad and bipartisan support for this legislation, apparently only one Member of the Senate objects to it and is able to block its consideration. As with so many measures before the Senate, there is little doubt that this bill would win overwhelming passage were it allowed to come to the floor.

But the innocent victims of LRA violence, past and present, need our help. The objection of one Senator should not be allowed to thwart us responding to that need.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING JOEL WAHLEN-MAIER AND JAVIER BEJAR

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of two respected and dedicated public servants, Fresno County Sheriff's Deputy Joel Wahlenmaier and